THE OBSERVER.

BY BEATRICE IRONSIDE.

The friend of Socrates, the friend of Plato,
But above all, the friend of truth.

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AUSTRIAN DALMATIA.

LETTER OF A TRAVELLER OF DISTINCTION, FROM SEBENICO, IN AUSTRIAN DALMATIA, DATED MARCH 4, 1805.

The country from which I write to you is, in the present political situation of Europe, of the highest importance, and yet but imperfectly known. I will give you some account of its manners and peculiarities. The head-quarters of the troops which have lately arrived are at Zara, the capital of the province, and most of the men are distributed among the desert islands of the Guarnero, and from Cattaro to Trau.

Sebenico is composed of wretched houses, among which a few good buildings, belonging to wealthy inhabitants, are constructed, in an amphitheatrical form, on steep rocks. It contains a fortress, partly the work of nature and partly of art, which, upwards of a century ago, defied the repeated attacks of the Turks, to whom it would have been an important post. Many years since Sebenico was the asylum of pirates, to whom the narrow entrance out of the sea into the Cherka, which may be so easily defended, afforded the utmost security against any surprize.

This town is at present inhabited by Morlacks, as they are denominated. The *Nobili* in general dress in the German fashion; and, besides the Illyrian, which is the language of the country, they speak bad Italian. They are not very partial to the Germans. Among them there are a few well-disposed people; but all, without exception, are rude and uncultivated. Of opportunities of instruction they are utterly destitute. Venice, to whom this country was formerly subject, suffered its inhabitants to receive nothing but its cast-off fashions, whithout, however, losing sight of the grand object, the revenues it derived from them. The fair sex is about a century behind the females of Germany: in a word, knitting and sewing are the whole of their accomplishments: literature, the arts, fine works, and music, being entirely unknown here, excepting to a very small number of the men who have been educated in Italy.

The country is of the most dreary description, particularly the

shores of the Cherka, with their perpendicular rocks, towering aloft to the skies. For many miles there is neither wood nor field; nothing but a surface of craggy rock. Nature cannot possibly be more niggardly. The subsistence of the natives consists of some wretched fruits; *minestra*, a kind of thick, half raw rice soup, mixed with water and oil, mutton, small wild beans, and hard sheep's milk cheese, are the food of the lower classes; fish, fowl, and beef, of the higher ranks; but wine is so plentiful, that all of them live in a continual intoxication.... Hence their incapacity for all mental exertions, and the principal trait in their character, indolence. Good vegetables, fruits, good milk, and fresh butter, are things to which they are utter strangers. Veal was never seen here and with any game they are unacquainted. All the men continually go armed; and even the peasant, when driving his cattle or engaged in any other occupation. Of social parties, or assemblies, there are none, not even among the higher classes.

Not far from Sebenico is Spalatro, where a temple, a monument of Roman grandeur, still remains entire, in perfect magnificence. It was once consecrated to Jupiter, but is now employed for Christian worship. Spalatro likewise contains the ruins of a palace of Dioclesian; but no traces are now left of the splendid gardens of that Emperour, which were situated at Salona. Here and there are found other monuments of past greatness, proofs that the rulers of Greece and Rome had likewise settled there. Their spirit, however, was buried beneath these venerable ruins; all is now a scene of wildness and desolation.

The climate is sharp, and you may perceive that you are near the sea. The situation of Sebenico is such as to increase the force of the winds, and hence the scanty vegetation in the surrounding country.

The same ceremonies are observed here at weddings and at funerals. The greatest dainty on such an occasion is a *castrano* (a sheep) roasted whole, and an incredible quantity of wine is consumed, so that the guests are scarcely able to see each other. The bride and bridegroom sleep the three first nights between two large vessele of wine, in the cellar, which, however is not under ground.

Their dances, in which those who choose to take part in the amusement form a long row, are not accompanied with instrumental music, but only with a kind of bawling, which always ends with *O!* and in a very simple manner repeats the atchievements of an ancient Illyrian king, called Marco. They have a second kind of dance, in which each person moves by himself in little circles, in measured time, without any noise or singing whatever. A third kind of dance is a mixture of figures that cannot easily be described, accompanied with the sound of a kind of drum, and another instrument, consisting of a thick string of strained horse-hair, across which a thinner is drawn; it gives

a disagreeable tone, and is called *gusta.* When these diversions are over, the relations and acquaintances fill their hats and the empty bottles amidst the most dreadful howling. In this manner they attend the new-married couple to their dwelling, or the deceased to their grave. All the friends then go home, and endeavour by a carousal, suited to their circumstances and their taste, to testify their sorrow for the loss they have sustained, or their joy for the happy union.

Of newspapers, one individual takes *The Journal le Francfort.* Besides this, you may now and then see a Vienna or a Florence Journal; but they are not received regularly.

For the Observer.

THE DRESS AND AMUSEMENTS OF THE *FASHIONABLE WORLD.*

There are in the dress of this people many singularities, upon which he who wishes to say every thing that could be said, might say a great deal. The peculiarity which a stranger would be most apt to remark, is that of their striving to be as unlike as possible to the rest of the world. This appears, indeed, to be the parent of almost every other peculiarity; and certainly gives birth to many changes not a little ridiculous and prejudicial.

It being a sort of fundamental maxim with them, that superiority consists in dissimilitude, they become engaged in a perpetual competition with the world at large, and to a certain degree with each other. In order to maintain this struggle for pre-eminence, they are compelled to vary the modes and materials of their dress in all the ways which a fanciful imagination can suggest. It happens, through some strange infatuation, that those who effect to despise the man or woman of fashion, yet ape their dress and air with the most impertinent and vexatious perseverance. What is to be done in this case? Similitude is not to be endured. In order therefore to throw out their pursuers, these monopolizers of the mode are compelled to run into such eccentricities, as nothing could justify or palliate, but the distress to which they are reduced. If, for example, short skirts and low capes are copied by the herd of imitators, the fashionables seek their remedy in the opposite extreme: their skirts are drawn down to the calves of their legs, and their capes pulled over their ears with as much solemnity and dispatch as if their existence depended upon the measure. So if full petticoats and high 'kerchiefs are adopted by the misses of the crowd, the dressing chambers of fashion are all bustle and confusion:...The limbs are stripped, and the bosom laid bare, tho' the north wind may be blowing at the time; and coughs, rheumatisms, and consumptions be upon the wings of every blast

This rage for dissimilitude in the affairs of the *wardrobe*, is allowed an indefinite scope. Unfortunately, as far as I can learn, there are no determinate points, beyond which it would be esteemed indecent or imprudent to indulge it. The consequence is, that the *groom* and the *gentleman* may be often mistaken for each other; and he who is recognized to-day as *a man of fashion*, may to-morrow be confounded with one of *the people*.

I confess I have always regarded this part of their conduct as an impeachment of their political wisdom. I should have thought, *á priori*, that a people who are so jealous of their pre-eminence in society, would not have over-looked the degree in which dress contributes to uphold it.

Many a fashionable man must depend for the whole of his estimation, upon the cut of his coat, and the selection of his wardrobe. A frivolous or preposterous taste may therefore prove fatal to the only sort of reputation which it was in his power to obtain. But besides, an interchange of dress between people of fashion and those whom they consider their inferiors, may eventually produce very serious mischiefs. The distinctions of rank and condition are manifestly matters of external regulation, and consequently cannot be kept up without a due attention to external appearances. He therefore who makes himself vulgar or ridiculous, is guilty of an act of self-degradation; and the fault will be his own, if he is displaced or dispised: since he has renounced that appropriate costume, which proclaimed at once his station in society, and his determination to maintain it.

The fair sex appear also on their part to set all limits and restraints at defiance. They seem to feel themselves at perfect liberty to follow the prevailing mode, whatever that mode may be. The consequence is, *modesty* is often the last thing considered by the young, and *propriety* as completely neglected by the old. And this latter circumstance may serve to acconnt in some measure for the little respect which is said to be paid to age in the fashionable world.

To judge from the histories of all nations, it seems impossible that length of years, if accompanied with those characteristicks which denote and become it, should not excite spontaneous veneration. But if the shrivelled arm must be bound in ribbons and bracelets, if the withered limbs must be wrapped in muslins and gauzes, and the wrinkled face be decorated with ringlets and furbelows, the silly veteran waves the privilege of her years; and since she disgusts the grave, without captivating the gay, she must not be surprised if she meets with respect from neither.

A fondness for *amusements* is one of the strongest characteristicks of this people. They may almost be said to live for little else. They pass the whole of that short day which they allow themselves, in making arrangements for spending the ensuing night. Indeed their preference of night to day is such,

that they seem to consider the latter as having no other value than as it leads to the former, and affords an opportunity of preparing for its enjoyment. And hence I suppose it is, that such multitudes among them dine by candle-light, and go to bed by day-light.

This passion for diversion renders the *Sunday* particularly irksome to persons of any sort of *ton* in the fashionable world. A dose of piety in the morning is well enough, though it is somewhat inconvenient to take it quite so early, but then it wants a play, or a dance, or a something else, to carry it off.... There are indeed some *esprit-forts* among the ladies who are trying with no little success to redeem a portion of the sabbath from the insufferable bondage of the Bible and the sermon-book; and naturalize that continential distribution of the day, which gives the morning to devotion, and the evening to dissipation. It is but justice to the gentlemen to say, that they discover no backwardness in supporting a measure so consonant to all their wishes. It is therefore not impossible that some considerable changes in this respect may soon be brought about.

The rage for amusements is so strong in this people, that it seems to supercede all exercise of judgment in the choice and the conduct of them. To go every where, see every thing, and know every body, are, in their estimation, objects of such importance, that in order to accomplish them, they put themselves to the greatest inconveniences, and commit the very grossest absurdities. Hence they will rush into crowds, to shine where they cannot be seen, to dance where they cannot move, and to converse with friends whom they cannot approach; and, what is more, though they cannot breathe for the pressure, and can live for the heat, yet they call this—*enjoyment*.

Nor does this passion suffer any material abatement by the progress of time. Many veterans visit, to the last, the haunts of polite dissipation; they lend their countenance to those dramas of vanity in which they can no longer act their part; and show their incurable attachment to the pleasures of this world, by their unwillingness to decline them. The infirmities which attend upon the close of life are certainly designed to produce other habits; and it should seem that when every thing announces an approaching dissolution, the amusements of the drawing-room might give way to the employments of the closet. Persons, however, of this description, are of another mind; and as every difficulty on the score of teeth, hoariness, and wrinkles, can be removed by the happy expedients of ivory, hair-caps, and cosmetics, there is certainly no *physical* objection to their continuing among their fashionable acquaintance, till they are wanted in another world.

ADOLESCENS.

MEMOIR
OF JOHN FRANCIS DE LA HARPE.

JOHN FRANCIS DE LA HARPE was born in Paris in 1739; his father was a Swiss, and a Captain of Artillery in the service of France. He had no fortune in prospect, and owed his education to the kindness of the Principal of the college d'Harcourt. The young la Harpe carried away the university prizes, and soon distinguished himself by his productions. At the age of twenty-five he gave to the stage his tragedy of Warwick, which met with great success; but his future essays in the same way did not answer the public expectations; with the exception of Philoctetes, translated from Sophocles. The absence of the female character is a singular trait in this tragedy; without love, the performance interests by its noble simplicity, and by bringing to our recollection the high state of the tragic art in Greece. Every year, besides his tragedies, this writer produced pieces of poetry, and prose essays, which were crowned with prizes of the different academies. This honour was conferred on his eulogiums on Fenelon, Racine, Catinat, and Charles V. He had for a long time the charge of the literary part of the Mercure.

Having shown himself a good poet and a good orator, he appeared with great *eclat* as a critic; he displayed a profound acquaintance with criticism, and a correct taste; of which his lectures at the Lyceum or *Cours complet de Littérature*, furnish illustrious proofs. On this laborious work his fame is principally founded. Authors, it is true, are sometimes treated with too much severity, but it every where discloses views favourable to the advancement of letters. Ordinarily in his literary judgments, we meet with that purity of style to which he had reached, sound principles of taste, and a remarkable talent for discussion, as well as close and forcible reasoning; could he have commanded his passions when treating of his contemporaries, and had he adopted a style less imperious and decisive, he might have filled with dignity the chair of Quintilian. His powers were considerable, but it was his misfortune greatly to over-rate them. When the revolution broke out, he cherished notions of reform, without carrying them to extremes; but when the reign of terrour taught him that all was capable of being abused; when he saw the ideas of liberty, equality, and justice, become rallying points for the factious; and when he had been confined in one of the prisons of the capitol as a suspected person; he came out of it filled with indignation against tyranny, and inspired with zeal for that holy religion which it was attempted to overturn, by ridiculing its worship, and proscribing its ministers. He had been the disciple and great admirer of Voltaire, who had rewarded with eulogiums his attachment to the party of the modern philosophers; he now declared himself their enemy, and attacked their principles in all his writings,

from this period unto his death. On the 18th Fructidor (4th Sept.) he was condemned to deportation: but he had the good fortune to conceal himself in a secure asylum, and to escape the proscription. He died in the winter of 1803, at the age of 64. In his will these words occur; "I implore divine providence to answer to the prayers which I have offered for the happiness of my country! May it long enjoy peace and tranquillity! May the holy maxims of the gospel be generally followed for the good of society!" M. de Fontanes, in a short and brilliant eulogium on him, says, "Letters and France have lost in la Harpe a poet, an orator, and an illustrious critic." He penegyrized the great men of the bright days of eloquence and poetry; while their spirit and their language are to be found in the writings of a disciple who had formed himself on their model. It was in their name that he attacked, to his last moment, false literary doctrines; and in this kind of combat his life was employed to secure the triumph of true principles. If this courageous devotion secured him fame, it did not insure him happiness. I cannot dissemble that the frankness of his character, and the impartial rigour of his censures, too often alienated benevolence from his name and his labours; so that he acquired only esteem where others would have obtained enthusiastic attachment. He expired at an age when the thoughts have lost nothing of their vigour, and when his talents had been strengthened and increased by the extraordinary events of the last twelve years. It is known that he had become a proselyte to those useful and consolatory opinions, on which the social system reposes: these not only enriched his ideas and his style with new beauties, but they mitigated the sufferings of his latter days. The God whom Fenelon and Racine adored, comforted on the bed of death the eloquent panegyrist of these great and pious men. The works of de la Harpe have been collected in six volumes, 8vo; but this edition is very incomplete, and renders it desirable that another should be given to the public.

Gustavus the IIId. the late king of Sweden, was the advocate and patron of Letters and the Arts. In his oration to the Swedish army...

"I am not ignorant, (says he) that there are some persons who question the utility of *belles lettres* and the arts, who regard them as a superfluity which enervates the mind, and as an object of disspiation, calculated only to amuse the leisure of an effeminate race; who think, in one word, that the arts ought to be banished from the bosom of a bold and courageous people. But for what does bravery itself combat, if it be not to acquire immortality? Why does the useful magistrate sacrifice his repose, and subject himself to the injustice of his contemporaries, and to the cabals of the envious, but from the hope that enlight-

ened posterity will one day do justice to his memory? And how could he cherish this hope, if writers did not exist, who, formed by the exercise of genius, undertake their defence, and transmit their names to posterity? What employment is more delightful to a man of letters, what a more noble recreation for the statesman, than to renew the memory of the benefactors of our country? And who will be able to erect their judgment on a more solid basis, or better appreciate and describe their qualities, than those individuals who have been occupied from their birth in the improvement of our native tongue; or those who, elevated to the most important offices in the state, are well acquainted with the great principles on which the art of government is founded?

"To honour the memory of great men is to invite their descendants to imitate them. It is as if we said, "Soldiers, judges, statesmen, citizens, you who inherit the names of these heroes, or who now fill their places, attend; behold the tribute which grateful posterity pays to their memories; and merit, if it be possible, merit the same encomiums. Your names will be carried before the tribunal of posterity; do not degenerate from your ancestors; your reputation, like theirs, is in your own power."

His sentiments on the liberty of the press, mark the strength of his understanding, the liberality of his mind, and his patriotic spirit:

"It appears to me (says Gustavus) on attentively considering the subject, that the liberty of the press is not injurious in general, and that it cannot become dangerous but by the abuse of it, which is sometimes displayed.

"Abuses are the consequence of human frailty, which blends with the best institutions; and, if we must oppose those which are in themselves beneficial, through the fear of abuses which might be introduced, we should never establish any thing useful to the public.

"In a disunited nation, divided by opinions, principles, and interests, as the Swedish nation has been, a subject cannot be always considered under the same aspect by different parties, or at least it will appear in a doubtful light.

"In England, the liberty of the press was prohibited when Charles I. lost his head on the scaffold, and when the fugitive James II. abandoned the throne of his ancestors to his ambitious son-in-law That people were legally in possession of this right at the end of the reign of William III. or at the commencement of that of the house of Hanover; a family who have occupied the throne with more glory and security than any of their predecessors. If Wilkes excited some seditious movements, we ought rather attribute them to the imprudent notice which government took of his writings, than to the momentary sensation

which they produced, and which would have left no more durable impression that other writings of the same kind.

"It is by the liberty of the press that kings learn the truth, which is so carefully hidden from them, and often with too much success. Ministers there find the advantage of receiving sincere and merited praise, or the opportunity of explaining to the public the false interpretations which are given of their measures. By the same channel, in short, the nation can at one time enjoy the consolation of complaint, and at another be convinced that its murmurings are ill-founded."

For the Observer.

MILITARY CONSIDERATIONS...CONTINUED.

2d PART.

You have no colonies to victual, or to protect, Gentlemen; hence the construction of 74's is an immense expence, as you well know, and which FOR THE PRESENT, might be employed on objects much more efficacious, and of much more immediate necessity.

As for what regards the protection of the commerce of the Mediterranean, I have already replied to this point, which is but an accessary object, compared with the rest.

2d. Gun-boats

Are only proper for *co-operating* in defence; but are in themselves insufficient; and the fate of the famous floating batteries which attacked Gibraltar in 1782, with 212 pieces of brass of 26 calibre, do not allow the supposition that this species of fortification should be more successful here.

3d. Fortifications

To serve as arsenals and armed places, or places of refuge, would be very expensive, and could not be raised in a day, when nothing but bombs are now used in sieges, all fortifications without *cazemattes* must be forced in a moment.

Now, it is not with the sum of 150,000 *dollars*, which I find is to be appropriated to this purpose, that we can even admit the idea of fortifying immense towns, in a word, a country which has 1500 miles of open coast, (without counting Louisiana, nor the course of the Mississippi, nor the frontiers of Canada) because this moderate sum would hardly suffice to fortify the bay of New-York, or to shelter New-Orleans from a vigorous attack.

4th. Your *Militia* not being yet versed in *tacticks*, nor having had experience, their very ardour would be injurious to them if they are not instructed before hand, and guided by *practiced* officers, in the various minutiæ of service, particularly in case they had to contend with troops, habituated to land-service....

And I will add, that the important points of military service, do not consist merely in *parades*. These exercises are the alphabet of the art of war, and nothing more.

It would be an illusion to rely on the militia, in alledging the example and practice of the ancient republicks, where the armies appeared to be suddenly formed of *citizens*. The Greek republicks had only to fight without, with barbarians absolutely ignorant of tacticks; and besides, the Greeks were inured to war, because they were almost continually engaged in internal wars; therefore their example cannot be applied to your militia, who, on the contrary, might have to contend with troops infinitely more experienced and more skilled in manœuvres than themselves.

The mode of levee used amongst the Romans will not be more successfully adduced; for the Roman was but a soldier. He was neither mercantile nor maritime, nor was he peaceful; he was restless, ambitious, and ferocious, and his education as well as his amusements, rendered him a soldier in very essence.

What then is to be concluded from all these facts and incontestible principles; presented not to flatter but to become useful?

It is, that if this country deems it proper to place itself in a situation to command respect, it must without delay, create a temporary, moveable, and effective *Fortification*. *Temporary*, that it may be conformable to your constitution as much as to your pecuniary means; *moveable*, that it may be in analogy with the extent of your territory, and be transported wherever danger requires it; *effective*, by its organization, that is to say, by its armament, by its spirit, and its discipline.

FIRST MEANS OF DEFENCE;...FREE CORPS.

I will repeat to you at present, gentlemen, what I had the honour of writing to an honourable member of Congress, the 14th of February, 1805; that is to say, that I conceive but one manner of uniting these conditions, and these qualities in a *single method;* and that this method consists in the creation of some *free companies, organized upon the footing of legions.*

Here I shall recal the well known words of Vegice: *"It was a God who inspired the Romans with the idea of legions"*..... I will add, that all the great modern generals, have regretted not having it in their power to revive this powerful institution, amongst the nations to whose service they consecrated their valour and their genius.

The *legion* uniting in itself all military resources, in being *composed of every kind of arms*, is for this very reason perfectly adapted to the wants of an open country, which has neither strong holds, nor cavalry, and in which columns would be a long time abandoned to themselves without any support, and exposed

to long and rapid marches, which do not always permit the reunion of the different arms necessary in pressing expeditions.

But the *legion*, properly so called, being too numerous to be supported in this country in all necessary points; the proposition which I make of creating *free corps*, will reconcile all these interests.

And in fact, every *free corps*, being composed of some companies of all arms, would be the mould of the legion, which might be compleated in case of necessity by the *amalgamation of your militia*, to which it would also immediately lend great confidence, and quickly teach the habit of military labours, the spirit of discipline, and the exactitude of manœuvres.

The difference which exists between the legion and the free corps, consists not only in the number, but in as much as that legions are *troops of the line*, and that free corps are only considered as volunteers.

I repeat it, should this country be ever compelled to take arms, I am much deceived if, *as first declaration of war*, its enemies do not begin by the bombardment and ransoming of its principal maratime towns by a *coup de main*.

Can you organize your militia in the midst of such confusion, when courage itself may be momentarily confounded; when the sudden ruin of individuals will in so much have diminished public resources?

Again, *the captain and the general are not formed in an instant*. We have seen, it is true, men of inferiour grades become excellent and fortunate officers in the war of the French revolution, but it must not be forgotten that the greatest part of them had passed their lives in the army; that they were seconded by all the original French army, which had lost only *a part* of its *officiers de fortune*, (1) and which had retained all its under officers, who had been many years formed to all the essential and organic details of military service; it must not be forgotten that at the head of all the military departments, were amongst others, some excellent *officiers du genie*, no less famous for their knowledge, than for the part they took in the revolution.(1)... In short, it must not either be forgotten that those who did not possess the theory of war, could quickly acquire it, in a war unexampled for its activity, and from the variety of experience which arose from circumstances so extraordinary.

Every one well knows the enormous masses of men who precipitated themselves against each other; what was the rapidity of the operations, which were never suspended for a minute, whatever might be the misfortunes, the deprivations, the famine, the losses, or the state of the weather. In short it will be remembered that the *first requisition* was incorporated from amongst the original bands, and successively all the *conscriptions*, in those corps

(1) *Carnot, D'Arson, Cafarelli, Gassendi, &c. &c.*

which were already inured to war, whilst none of these men had for ten years been permitted to return to their homes.

Further, all Europe has seen, that frequently the chiefs of the French troops knew how to make war no other way than a *coup d'hommes*. Battles, it is true, are gained by this means, but every campaign costs a *hundred thousand* soldiers to the victor. This mode of obtaining success, cannot suit a wise government, which regards the blood of its citizens, as something; nor a country like this, where a rising population requires management.

This is not all: every one knows that from the first year of the war of the revolution, the fourth of France was in a state of insurrection, and that the peasantry (directed and guided by old and experienced officers) defied the cannon, and charged the troops of the line, armed with a simple club. When therefore, by the subjection of these provinces, the insurgents were obliged to enter the ranks of their adversaries, to march against the coalition, they were already soldiers, it may be said *soldiers of iron*, for they were poor, intrepid, and in rags.

The examples which might be brought forward, of the success of the *levies en masse* of the French Republic, and which were due unto the enthusiasm of liberty which animated some, to the rage for plunder of others, or in short to the guillotine which followed the camps, cannot then ensure a like success, from the *levies en masse* in a country which is not yet military, and which has so long enjoyed profound peace, and whose habits are of the most tranquil kind.

Certainly in the present state of things, no power on earth could hope to make a conquest of this country, and doubtless the American militia could repeat to the enemy, the fine expression of the Czar Peter to the soldiers of Charles the XII: "You shall beat us, whilst you teach us to beat you," but if there were any practicable means of obtaining this advantage, *without passing through so bloody and disastrous an apprenticeship*, which would throw back the prosperity of this country more than half a century, ought it to be neglected?

[*To be continued.*]

MARTIN LUTHER AND CALVIN.

To oppose the church of Rome in their idea of prayers addressed to the Saints, *Luther denied the immortality of the soul....* He said it expired with the body, but that God revived both. So that, according to his opinion, no one could enter into the visible presence of God till this operation had taken place. The Romish church holding a contrary opinion, he treated as im-

pious what it inculcates concerning the immortality of the soul. These are dreadful shifts for man who pretend to act by an impulse of the Divinity!

Calvin was originally named *Gauvin.* His stipend, as minister at Geneva, was as miserable as the income of a Welch curate. He was subject to *eleven* different maladies, which, continually afflicting him, irritated his dispositions. He had, indeed, so much acerbity in his temper, that he became unsupportable to those who were near him. It was this that occasioned many Germans to say—"that they preferred being in hell with Beza, to being in paradise with Calvin.' Every day he taught theology, preached, and held various conferences; yet, in spite of all his occupations, he contrived to leave behind him, as an author, nine ponderous folios! He died at Geneva, in 1594, aged fifty-five. He was a learned man; but he has caused a world of woe. He strove ambitiously to overturn every thing. He was cruel and vindictive: he occasioned the persecution of Michael Servatus, who was so cruelly put to death in the name of a Christian religion, and by the hands of men who profess Evangelical gentleness; and all this for a difference about the Trinity!

For the Observer.

HISTORICAL EPHEMERIS.

The 15th August, 1794, an Ambassador of the United States received the *fraternal embrace* from the President of the National Convention.

SELECTED POETRY.

A TALE

FROM A FRENCH MANUSCRIPT OF THE XIIITH CENTURY.

THE *LAY OF THE LITTLE BIRD.*

In days of yore, at least a century since,
There liv'd a carle* as wealthy as a prince:
His name I wot not; but his wide domain
Was rich with stream and forest, mead and plain;
To crown the whole, one manor he possess'd
In choice delight so passing all the rest,
No castle burgh or city might compare
With the quaint beauties of that mansion rare.
The sooth to say, I fear my words may seem
Like some strange fabling, or fantastick dream,
If, unadvis'd, the portraiture I trace,
And each brave pleasure of that peerless place;
Foreknow ye then, by necromantick might
Was rais'd this paradise of all delight;

* A mean, brutal man, a churl.

A good knight own'd it first; he, bow'd with age,
Died, and his son possess'd the heritage:
But the lewd stripling, all to riot bent,
(His chattels quickly wasted and forespent,)
Was driven to see this patrimony sold
To the base carle of whom I lately told.
Ye wot right well there only needs be sought
One spendthrift heir, to bring great wealth to nought.

A mighty tower the building central stood
In a vast plain encompass'd with a flood;
And, hence one lucid arm alone there stray'd,
That circled in a clustering orchard's shade:
'Twas a choice charming plat; profuse around
Flowers, roses, odorous spices cloth'd the ground;
Unnumber'd kinds, and all abundant show'r'd
Such aromatick balsam as they flower'd,
Their fragrance might have stay'd man's parting breath,
And chas'd the impending agony of death.
The ground one level held, and o'er the sward
Tall shapely trees their verdant foilage rear'd,
All equal growth, and low their branches came,
Thick set with goodliest fruit of every name.
In midst, to cheer the ravish'd gazer's view,
A gushing fount its waters upward threw.
Thence slowly on with chrystal current pass'd,
And crept into the distant flood at last:
But nigh its source a pine's umbrageous head
Stretch'd far and wide in deathless verdure spread,
Met with broad shade the summer's sultry gleam,
And through the livelong year shut out the beam.

Such was the scene:—yet still the place was bless'd
With one rare pleasure passing all the rest:
A wondrous bird of energies divine
Had fix'd his dwelling in the tufted pine;
There still he sat, and there with amarous lay
Wak'd the dim morn, and clos'd the parting day:
Match'd with these strains of linked sweetness wrought
The violin and full-ton'd harp were nought;
Of power they were with new-born joy to move
The cheerless heart of long-desponding love;
Of power so strange, that should they cease to sound,
And the blithe songster flee the mystic ground,
That goodly orchard's scene, the pine-tree's shade,
Trees, flowers, and fount, would all like vapour fade.

'Listen, listen to my lay!'
Thus the merry notes did chime,
'All who mighty love obey,
'Sadly wasting in your prime,
'Clerk and laick, grave and gay!
'Yet do ye, before the rest,
'Gentle maidens, mark me tell!
'Store my lesson in your breast,
'Trust me, it shall profit well:
'Hear, and heed me, and be blest!'

So sang the bird of old; but when he spied
The carle draw near, with altered tone he cried—
'Back, river, to thy source! and thee, tall tower,
'Thee, castle strong, may gaping earth devour!
'Bend down your heads, ye gaudy flowers, and fade!
'And wither'd be each fruit-tree's mantling shade!
'Beneath these beauteous branches once were seen
'Brave gentle knights disporting on the green,
'And lovely dames; and oft these flowers among,
'Stay'd the blithe bands, and joy'd to hear my song;
'Nor would they hence retire, nor quit the grove,
'Till many a vow were past of mutual love:
'These more would cherish, those would more deserve:
'Cost, courtesy, and arms, and nothing swerve.
'O bitter change! for master now we see
'A faitour villain carle of low degree;
'Foul gluttony employs his livelong day,
'Nor heeds nor hears he my melodious lay.'
So spake the bird: and, as he ceas'd to sing,
Indignantly he clapp'd his downy wing,
And straight was gone; but no abasement stirr'd
In the clown's breast at his reproachful word:
Bent was his wit alone by quaint device
To snare, and sell him for a passing price.
So well he wrought, so craftily he spread
In the thick foilage green his slender thread,
That when at eve the little songster sought
His wonted spray, his heedless foot was caught.
'How have I harm'd you?' straight he 'gan to cry,
'And wherefore would you do me thus to die?'—
'Nay, fear not,' quoth the clown, 'for death or wrong;
'I only seek to profit by thy song;
'I'll get thee a fine cage, nor shalt thou lack
'Good store of kernels and of seeds to crack;
'But sing thou shalt; for if thou play'st the mute,
'I'll spit thee, bird, and pick thy bones to boot.'
'Ah, woe is me!' the little thrall replied,
'Who thinks of song, in prison doom'd to bide?
'And, were I cook'd, my bulk might scarce afford
'One scanty mouthful to my hungry lord.'

What may I more relate?—the captive wight
Assay'd to melt the villain all he might;
And fairly promis'd, were he once set free,
In gratitude to teach him secrets three;
Three secrets, all so marvellous and rare,
His race knew nought that might with these compare.

The carle prick'd up his ears amain; he loos'd
The songster thrall, by love of gain seduced:
Up to the summit of the pine-tree's shade
Sped the blithe bird, and there at ease he stay'd,
And trick'd his plumes full leisurely, I trow,
Till the carle claim'd his promise from below:
'Right gladly;' quoth the bird: 'now grow thee wise:
'All human prudence few brief lines comprise:
'First then, lest haply in the event it fail,
'YIELD NOT A READY FAITH TO EVERY TALE:'—

'Is this thy secret ?' quoth the moody elf,
'Keep then thy silly lesson for thyself ;
'I need it not :'—'Howbe 'tis not amiss
'To prick thy memory with advice like this :
'But late, meseems, thou hadst forgot the lore :
'Now may'st thou hold it fast for evermore.
'Mark next my second rule and sadly know,
'WHAT'S LOST, 'TIS WISE WITH PATIENCE TO FOREGO.'

The carle, though rude of wit, now chaf'd amain ;
He felt the mockery of the songster's strain.
'Peace,' quoth the bird ; 'my third is far the best ;
'Store thou the precious treasure in thy breast :
'WHAT GOOD THOU HAST, NE'ER LIGHTLY FROM THEE CAST :'
He spoke, and twittering fled away full fast.
Straight, sunk in earth, the gushing fountain dries,
Down fall the fruits, the wither'd pine tree dies,
Fades all the beauteous plat, so cool, so green
Into thin air, and never more is seen.

Such was the meed of avarice :—bitter cost !
The carle who all would gather, all has lost.

FROM THE YEW-YORK EVENING POST.

On revisiting the Cottage of Rosa in early Spring, after a long absence.

Seven Summers have flown, and once more do I see
The fields and the groves I deserted so long ;
Scarce a bud yet appears on the winter-beat tree,
Nor a bird yet enlivens the sky with his song.

For though spring has returned, yet the chilly wind blows,
And the violets and daisies still hide in the ground :
But one dear little flower, one beautiful *Rose*,
Here blooms and here blushes the seasons all round.

Thou pride of the plain, little queen of the grove,
Still fresh is thy foliage, and sweet thy perfume,
And still the bright object of Paridel's love,
As when thy first buds were beginning to bloom.

And though fate has decreed that he must not aspire
This blossom divine on his bosom to wear,
Yet still must he cherish the tender desire,
And make thee forever the theme of his prayer.

Blow gently, ye Zephyrs, be genial ye showers,
Bright and warm be the sky o'er thy dear native vale,
And may no bitter blast ever ravage the bowers,
That guard thy fair frame from the merciless gale.

And when the short season of blooming shall end,
Which fate to the children of nature has given,
May some cherub of beauty, to snatch thee, descend,
And bear thee to bloom in the garden of heaven. PARIDEL.

J. ROBINSON, PRINTER.